LIBRARY

HEALTH
A 25 APR 1945
C.R. 37

MINISTRY OF HEALTH
LIBRARY

THE

RURAL DISTRICT OF ELY

=====

ANNUAL REPORT

for the Year
1 9 4 3

by

K. S. MAURICE-SMITH, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.

Medical Officer of Health.

1 9 4 3.

RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL OF ELY.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH FOR 1943.

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

I regret the delay in presenting, as Medical Officer of Health, my report for 1943.

It will be remembered that my predecessor resigned on the 31st March, 1943. My appointment was not approved until mid-August of the same year despite the fact that I had already been approached by your Clerk during March. During the 4½ months interval there was **no** Medical Officer of Health for the Rural District, and statistical returns only were kept by the Clerk. I must emphasize that from the months of April to mid-August the Rural District had no local Medical Officer of Health on its Staff.

The delay was not of my making and was, I am given to understand, due to the apparent slowness of higher authority in sanctioning my appointment. When I did take up the appointment I found no records of any work done during the first quarter of the year. I formally and most definitely disclaim responsibility for any statistics, or their absence, or any work done or not done prior to August, 1943.

I occupied the remaining months of this year by picking up the many loose threads I found, and at the same time doing such routine work of an urgent nature which presented itself.

In view of my remarks above, I think it will be clear that I have insufficient facts and figures on which to base a Public Health Report for the Rural District of Ely during this year. I propose, therefore, to confine myself to noting a few reasonably outstanding facts relating to the latter part of the year of which I have personal knowledge. This method will effect also an economy in paper!

1. Infectious Diseases.

The returns show no abnormal features, apart from an epidemic of measles occuring during the last three months of the year. This reached its peak during the last week of November and the first week of December. Fortunately, the type of case was mild and there were few complications.

1. Infectious Diseases (Contd.)

I must draw your attention to one point which may or may not be significant. During the last week of November and the first week of December, 23 cases of measles were notified, the peak week being the week ending 4.12.43., when 15 cases were notified. There was a decline after that, the only other bad week being that ending 25.12.43, when 11 cases were notified. The Little Downham Infants' School was closed on 2.12.43 until the end of the year. I am more than ever convinced of the desirability of closing schools, especially Infants' Schools, during an epidemic of Infectious Disease.

2. Influenza Epidemic.

In December, 1943, there was an outbreak of typical influenza. This was quite sharp while it lasted, but fortunately the end of the month saw a definite and lasting decrease in the number of cases.

3. Tuberculosis.

Only one new case was notified under the Tuberculosis Regulations, 1930, that of a boy of 7 years of age with non-respiratory tuberculosis.

This shows a decrease of 2 cases on the preceding year.

4. Diphtheria Immunization.

The following is a summary of children who completed the full course of diphtheria immunization during the year :

Under 5.	154.	52.3% of the population.
5 - 15	164.	92.41% of the population.

These figures probably do not reflect absolutely accurately the true state of affairs, as possibly children immunized by private practitioners, and attending schools outside the Educational Authority area, are not all included. In any case, I have great satisfaction in submitting these figures, because, on the one hand, as Medical Officer to the Isolation Hospital, I am fully convinced of the efficacy of immunization in modifying an attack to diphtheria; whilst, on the other hand, my work as a private practitioner leads me to the profound conclusion that immunization does minimize the chance of a child contracting this disease.

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2017 with funding from
Wellcome Library

https://archive.org/details/b29519196

5. Miscellaneous.

i. In December, 1943, the Clinic at Tower House, Ely, specially for the treatment of scabies, was closed, as it was felt that the small number of cases coming up for treatment did not warrant the comparatively high cost of maintaining the Clinic.

ii. Housing. In company with the Surveyor and the Housing Surveyor, I carried out inspections of a number of houses.

iii. Cowsheds and Milk. Generally speaking in many cases I am of the opinion that the general standard of cleanliness of cowsheds left much to be desired.

K. S. MAURICE-SMITH

Medical Officer of Health
Ely Rural District Council.